

Your Town

[Weather](#) | [traffic](#) | [transit](#)

search

Text size

FRAMINGHAM

Framingham resident to be honored for cancer fund-raising efforts

Posted November 6, 2009 09:00 AM

[E-mail](#) | [Link](#) | [Comments \(\)](#)

By **Matt Rocheleau**, Globe Correspondent

Patrick Sullivan stood at his mother's hospital bedside during her final days, and, with tears streaming down their faces, he made a promise.

Shortly before his 55-year-old mother lost a 14-year battle with breast cancer last October, Sullivan vowed to follow his mom's request to never give up on the work he'd already begun helping raise money for a cure to the country's second most common cause of death, cancer, which claims around 1,500 lives daily in the U.S.

"You can't let any other son go through what you're going through right now," Sullivan, a lifelong Framingham resident, recalled his mother telling him. "You can't let another mother and son feel the pain we're feeling. You can't let that mother-son bond be broken like this again."

And, it would be hard to imagine JoAnne Sullivan could be anything but proud of what her 24-year-old son has done to keep his promise in the year since her passing.

Through various fundraising efforts, Patrick Sullivan raised around \$150,000 in 2009 for cancer research including around \$8,000 for the American Cancer Society's annual Relay for Life fundraiser for which he will be honored at a conference tonight by the society as this year's Highest Individual Youth Fundraiser in New England.

"When I see her again, I just want to be able to say to her that moms and sons don't suffer the way we did anymore," Sullivan said.

A recent graduate of Bryant College in Rhode Island where he studied communications and did a lot of fundraising, Sullivan has used his learned and natural speech-giving ability to give inspire others to help in cancer cure research efforts.

Sullivan and his father, Walter, were guests on radio and TV broadcasts during the 8th annual WEEI/NESN Jimmy Fund Radio-Telethon this past August. The 36-hour broadcast helped to raise more than \$4.55 million and featured compelling stories from Dana-Farber patients, doctors, researchers, and nurses and celebrity guests and sports stars.

The father-son duo discussed memories of their mother and wife and a talked about a golf tournament fundraiser they held at Framingham Country Club, which raised over \$50,000 in JoAnne Sullivan's memory.

Patrick Sullivan said when his mother was first diagnosed with cancer he was only around nine years old and did not realize how much the cancer and radiation treatments affected her. And, though he said he now realizes he saw his mother go through "the most painful thing in the world," he considers himself fortunate for the time he did spend with her.

THINGS TO DO IN FRAMINGHAM

UPCOMING EVENTS

BROWSE

- [Arts & Crafts](#)
- [Community](#)
- [Food & Dining](#)
- [Performing Arts](#)
- [Shopping](#)
- [Sports & Outdoors](#)

ADVERTISEMENT

BOSTON.COM TWITTER ACCOUNTS



Waiting for twitter.com to feed in the latest...

[Follow other Boston.com Tweets](#) | [What is Twitter?](#)

He remembered driving home from college two or three times each week to visit with his mother. It was more than just about being there for her, "she was like my best friend," he said.

The Marian High graduate now works as head of ticket sales for Providence R.I.-based Classic Entertainment Sports, Inc., and has used ticket sales promotions to help collect donations for cancer research.

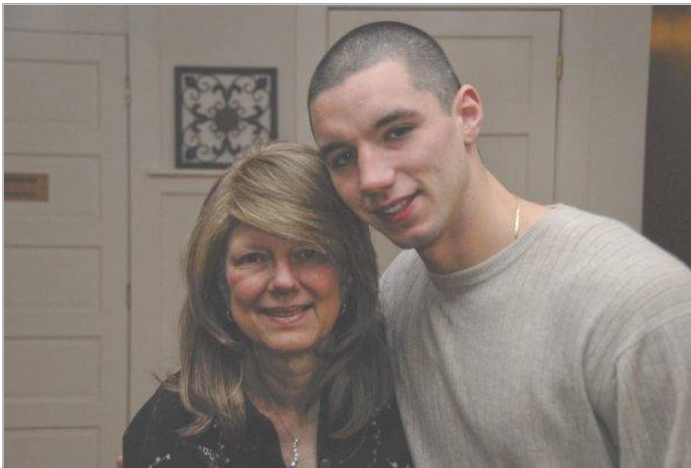
His dad and sister, Meaghan, have helped him to raise money at various events and Meaghan is planning to start her own relay team at her school, Becker College.

"We're not looking to be heroes," said Patrick Sullivan.

"He's doing it because he loved his mother and it's something he promised her on her dying bed - that he'd find a cure for cancer - not more treatment, a cure," Walter Sullivan said of his son.

Jami Fischer, a special events coordinator at the American Cancer Society, has worked closely with Patrick Sullivan during the Relay for Life program.

"He's an absolute inspiration for anyone," said Fischer who is due to give birth in two weeks. "I told Patrick I wish my son or daughter would be just like him."



Patrick Sullivan and his mom JoAnne at a surprise party held for JoAnne in 2007. Shortly before his 55-year-old mother lost a 14-year battle with breast cancer last October, Patrick Sullivan vowed to follow his mom's request to never give up on the work he'd already begun helping raise money for a cure to cancer. (Courtesy: Patrick Sullivan)

[Comment](#) | [Permalink](#) | [E-mail](#)

[Previous entry](#)

[Next entry](#)

